



# NEWS & NOTES

A PUBLICATION OF THE MWRA ADVISORY BOARD  
MAY 2012

## ADVISORY BOARD ADOPTS RECOMMENDATIONS

The Advisory Board's *Integrated Comments and Recommendations* for FY13 propose that the Authority set the rate revenue requirement increase at no higher than 3% and no lower than 3%. This recommendation reduces MWRA's proposed increase by nearly 25%, which takes into consideration our communities' current fiscal challenges, while balancing the significant potential increases ahead of us. On the capital side, the Advisory Board recommended that the next capital spending cap (FY14-18) be set at no higher than \$800 million.

The Advisory Board used the FY13 *Comments* to tee up significant policy discussions. This would include the following:

- Advocates for MA DEP to assume primacy over wastewater issues
- The MWRA should seek a 9 MGD exemption from the state regulatory agencies to jumpstart sale of water to non-MWRA communities
- Participate on AB community task force, with state and local police to standardize police detail rates and utilization.
- Convene a committee to discuss the water rate methodology, specifically standby fees.
- File legislation to secure \$100 million dollars in economic development funds, which would assist communities to connect into the MWRA water system
- Due to the MWRA staff median age of 52, the AB recommends strengthening plans for succession to insure there is an uninterrupted and continuous service to our service area communities.

To access the FY13 Comments and Recommendations by the Advisory Board, please click [here](#).

## CONCLUSIONS FROM MWRA STAFFING STUDY

At the request of the MWRA Advisory Board, MWRA's Board of Directors authorized staff to conduct a staffing study to determine the appropriate staffing level for the agency over the next five years. Consultants from Amawalk and PEER Consulting were hired for the analysis and recently explained the results at the May Board of Directors meeting.

The MWRA's goal is to achieve a steady state with staffing, although every utility is different and comparing of staff between them is not always an easy task. However, the results from the current study were very different from the 2001 study. The MWRA has taken significant steps since 2001 to become a competitive utility from a high of 1547 employees to the current level of 1,185. The five-year staffing target of 1,150 full-time equivalents (FTEs) is a reduction of 35 employees and reasonable to enhance the Authority's competitive position. The staffing target can be met through attrition. MWRA should track headcount on the basis of FTEs. It should also be noted that the analysis concluded that the MWRA is also significantly below the average of comparable utilities in terms of overtime spending as a percentage of total labor costs. The full report on the staffing study is now being reviewed by the MWRA Advisory Board.

If you are interested in viewing the Staffing Study presentation made at the May Board of Directors Meeting, please click [here](#).

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

June 6th	MWRA Board of Directors Mtg. in Charlestown
June 15th	AB Executive Committee Mtg. in Charlestown
June 21st	AB Mtg. at 11:30AM in Lexington at Cary Hall
June 27 <sup>th</sup>	MWRA Board of Directors Mtg. in Charlestown